



**U.S. Department of Justice**

**Stephen J. Murphy  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Michigan**

*Suite 2001  
211 West Fort Street  
Detroit, Michigan 48226-3277  
Fax: (313) 226-3561*

**For Immediate Release:**

**Contact:** Gina Balaya (313) 226-9193

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**EVENT: Sentencing**

**Defendant: Monasser Mosad Omian et al**

**TWO DEARBORN RESIDENTS SENTENCED FOR SENDING MILLIONS  
TO YEMEN AND SWITZERLAND THROUGH AN ILLEGAL "HAWALA"**

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Two residents of Dearborn, both originally from Yemen, were sentenced today pursuant to their May 11, 2006 guilty pleas to operating a Detroit-area unlicensed money remitting business (a "hawala") from 1999 through 2005 that sent \$1.8 million to a Swiss bank account and over \$8 million to Yemen, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced.

Sentenced today before the Honorable Arthur J. Tarnow were:

- Monasser Mosad Omian, also known as Nagi Mohamad Sharian, age 56, to 30 months in custody, 2 years supervised release, a \$200 special assessment, and forfeiture of approximately \$200,000 in cash and \$9,693,669 in substitute assets;
- Jarallah Nasser Wasil, also known as Kaid Ahmed Almulaiki, age 29, to 57 months in custody, 3 years supervised release, a \$400 special assessment, and forfeiture of approximately \$200,000 in cash and \$9,693,669 in substitute assets. Because one of the charges Jarallah Wasil pled to was naturalization fraud, he continues to face the possibility of deportation following service of his sentence.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "We cannot permit nearly ten million dollars, much of it involved in criminal activity, to slip unseen out of the United States, bound for destinations such as Yemen or a Swiss bank account. These sentences should leave no one in doubt that operating this sort of unlicensed money remitting business can result in significant prison time."

Over the objections of the government, the defendants will remain on bond and permitted to report voluntarily to serve their sentences.

According to the information presented to the court at the time of the plea, the defendants collected over \$9,693,669.62 from mosques, businesses, and individuals across the United States (including California, Colorado, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Washington State and Michigan) and sent it to Switzerland and to Yemen. Some of the money was proceeds of criminal activity, or was used in furtherance of criminal activity. For example, the conspirators obtained Cathinone ("Khat"), a Schedule I controlled substance, imported from Kenya and elsewhere, which they re-packaged and sold routinely at the Gabasha Market, 8033 McGraw, Detroit. The conspirators also sold contraband cigarettes that had State of Ohio tax stamps or fraudulently altered tax stamps. The conspirators commingled the money from the sales of Khat and contraband cigarettes with money from the operation of the Hawala, and laundered it through the Hawala accounts.

The conspirators also used money from the Hawala accounts to finance other crimes, including visa and naturalization fraud, and to conceal their income so they could qualify for state and federal aid. They structured the cash transactions involving the Hawala in order to cause Comerica Bank and Charter One Bank to fail to file the cash transaction reports required by law and regulation for cash deposits and withdrawals over \$10,000.

Co-defendants Sadik Monasser Omian and Saleh Alli Nasser, also known as Ali Ghaleb Wasil, will be sentenced on September 12, 2006.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Daniel D. Roberts, FBI Special Agent in Charge, and Brian Moskowitz, Special Agent in Charge, Immigration and Customs

Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Cynthia Oberg and Julie A. Beck.